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MIMES AND RHYMES

MIMES AND RHYMES

BY

ARTHUR RICKETT

AUTHOR OF 'LOST CHORDS'

LONDON
R. BRIMLEY JOHNSON
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1901

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To

R. C. LEHMANN.

NOTE

MANY of the following sketches and verses have appeared already in certain periodicals. They have been revised, however, for this volume. My best thanks are due to the Proprietors of *Punch* and of the *Windsor Magazine*, and to the Editors of the *Westminster Gazette* and the *World*, for permission to reprint.

ARTHUR RICKETT.

LAMB BUILDING,
TEMPLE, E.C.,
April, 1901.

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MASTERPIECES MODERNIZED

FOREWORDS

In these days of much-edited classics, when editors furnish not only lengthy critical introductions, but more or less (occasionally less) illuminating notes of commentary to the text, a step still further in this direction is suggested. The writer of the ensuing sketches humbly commends to the notice of certain eminent literary persons the following suggestions. The sketches in question illustrate only faintly and faultily a scheme which will certainly be hailed with the greatest delight by many readers.

The scheme possesses the inestimable advantage of combining the brilliant qualities of certain modern writers with the admirable—yet undoubtedly old-fashioned—methods of an elder generation. And the present writer need scarcely suggest to the enthusiastic devotee at the shrine of St. Mudie that to be old-fashioned is a literary crime of the first magnitude, while

to be up-to-date, on the other hand, is a virtue of singular value.

With these few words of preface the sketches may be left to speak for themselves.

MASTERPIECES MODERNIZED

I.—HAMLET

(*Revised by G. B. S.*)

INTRODUCTION

THE writing of plays is an admirable amusement, but there is one drawback: you can't bring in yourself often enough. This is a pity, as you are bound to be more interesting and amusing than any of your characters. But the public (poor little dears!) won't have it. They don't like to see the legs of the man who is working the Punch-and-Judy show; it spoils, they think, the theatrical illusion. Illusion, forsooth! Why, bless my soul, it is only these excitable, meat-eating playgoers who expect illusion at the theatre! Well, if you are expected to make your puppets un-Shaw-[1:1]

there is only one way left if you want to talk about yourself (and this I always do, not only because it pleases me, but because it aggravates certain reviewers)—that is, to write an introduction to the plays. Did I say introduction? Well, of course, one needn't mention the plays; it is quite sufficient to chatter about vegetarianism and other isms, especially G. B. S.-ism, Upon my word, I really am a funny dog, and although I try to be serious just to puzzle people, I can't keep it up. The scientific law of gravitation has no terrors for me. I float in the air like a spirit (one of Maskelyne and Cooke's), shaking tambourines and playing tricks upon everyone. Amusing, isn't it? Perhaps, after frivolling with literature, I may ultimately settle down to good, solid, serious work as a vestryman.

ACT III.

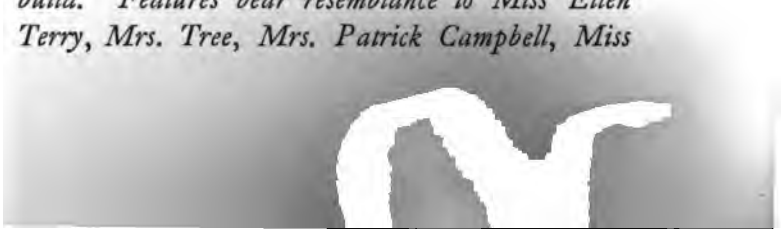
Morning-room in the Castle of Elsinore, in Denmark. The room is not rectangular, one corner being cut off diagonally by the massive doorway, and the opposite one rounded by a turret window, in which stands a bust of the late King by a second-rate sculptor.

There are three highly ornamental chairs in the room, none of them meant to be sat upon. The walls are covered by cheap lithographs of dull Scandinavian moralists. There is no portrait of Dr. Ibsen.

Enter HAMLET *arrayed as if for a fancy-dress funeral. His tights are not unexceptional fits. His face glows with mystic rapture and limelight.*

HAMLET. William or G. B. S.—that is the question;
Whether 'tis nobler for the mime to suffer
Will's horrid, contradictory similes,
Or take arms (and the man) 'gainst William S.,
And by a slashing—end him. To doze, to sleep,
Throughout these dull Shakespearian performances,
And miss th' inartistic, moralizing shocks,
The critic's heir to. 'Tis a consummation
Devoutly to be wished. But who comes here?
'Tis fair Ophelia, opportunely ending
This wearisome soliloquy.

OPHELIA (*is about twenty-two, ambiguous in build. Features bear resemblance to Miss Ellen Terry, Mrs. Tree, Mrs. Patrick Campbell, Miss*



Maud Jeffries, etc. Dress probably suggested by Wilkie Collins' novel 'The Woman in White'). I won't address you in blank verse, my lord; no English actress can speak that without falling into sing-song. So to the point. How are you feeling to-day?

HAMLET (*dismally*). So, so. Alas! the Danish *Telegraph* vexes me much by its senseless mangling of the Danish tongue.

OPHELIA. I do not follow you.

HAMLET (*testily*). Not follow me? Why, you follow me all through the play up to the end of Act IV. Then, thank goodness, you try the water cure. But perhaps you don't care for the 'legitimate.'

OPHELIA. I should like more mad scenes. The part's too thin for a leading lady, and, really, I show so little sense of character.

HAMLET. Ha, ha! more mad scenes! Get thee to the Independent Theatre Society, then. There canst thou take thy fill of mad scenes. I will write a drama for thee, some farcical tragedy, some grim comedy full of humorous pathos, something to make the great B.P. sit up. And they never know when to take me seriously.

OPHELIA. Oh, heavenly powers, restore him!

II.—ANTONY AND CLEOPATRA

(*Revised by G. B. S.*)

SCENE.—*Alexandria. Certain Jingo friends of* ANTONY *criticising their General in thoroughly English fashion. They wear the Roman uniform with a grace and distinction decidedly un-English, though of their tendency to swagger the same, unhappily, cannot be said. Time presumably some year* B.C.; *but points of chronology scarcely concern me, as each of the characters presents so far as possible that delightful modern product, George Bernard Shaw.*

PHILO (*addressing* DEMETRIUS). The fact is, Demi, old chap, I think Antony's going rather too far with her ladyship, eh? Too much of the lady's man, you know. You remember when Pompey's daughter came of age—that picnic up the Tiber? Oh, he's incorrigible. (*Sound of music without. Band of Egyptian volunteers preceding* ANTONY *and* CLEOPATRA.) M'm, the war correspondent of the *Rome News* was quite right in his criticism.

Enter ANTONY *and* CLEOPATRA, *both dressed in state.* ANTONY *looks bored.* CLEOPATRA *enjoys the excitement immensely.*

CLEOPATRA. Come along, you funny man! My! you do look cross!

ANTONY. It's this show-pageant business that you're so keen on. A fellow can't smoke, and I'm absolutely dying for a weed.

CLEOPATRA (*pouting*). What big pigs you soldier ones are! No eye for the picturesque. Charmion! where on earth's the girl? Charmion, when you've done ogling that officer, perhaps you will help me into my throne . . . as our friend here is so surly. . . . Antony, I'll scratch you if you don't smile.

ANTONY. You're a wicked little puss! . . . There. (*Offers arm. They ascend throne.*) What a dreadful squeeze! My dear Queen, this comes of letting the work be done by non-union workmen. I can hardly turn.

CLEOPATRA (*demurely*). It is rather a squeeze, but (*with a toss of the head*) you didn't mind that once.

ANTONY (*yawning*). No; but of late rheumatic twinges remind me.—By-the-bye, isn't it rather late? If you'll excuse me (*Tries to get away.*)

CLEOPATRA (*detains him*). You disagreeable man! You shall stop for a bit! So mean, when I especially ordered that concert party for you, in order to give you an excuse for forty winks.

ANTONY (*resigning himself*). All right. I suppose the cipher despatch must wait.

CLEOPATRA. You've worked the cipher despatch excuse rather thin. Confess you were dying for a game of nâ—âp.

ANTONY (*seeing that attendants look amused, and that he must assert his dignity*). Cleopatra (*assumes a full-dress manner*), Hear me, Queen.
The strong necessity of Time commands
Our services; but my full heart——

CLEOPATRA (*puts hand over his mouth*). For mercy's sake, Antony! This isn't a mass meeting. Keep all that rhetorical claptrap for Roman crowds.

ANTONY (*sulkily*). You used to like it; you used to dote on my set speeches. You seem to forget I'm a Roman General.

CLEOPATRA. My dear, there's nothing Roman about you, except your nose.

ANTONY. Well, if it comes to that, there's not too much of the Egyptian Queen about you. What are you reading?

CLEOPATRA (*holding paper at arm's length*). A

copy of *M.A.P.*, picked up outside your officers' quarters. Mark Antony's peccadilloes.

ANTONY (*reddening*). Jupiter! Give it me, there's a good girl. Oh, that accounts for Caesar recalling me. I thought he couldn't read the cipher.

CLEOPATRA. You're an out-and-out naughty man!

ANTONY (*with a desperate attempt at dignity*).

By the fire
That quickens Nile's slime, I go from hence.

CLEOPATRA. Chk! Leave Nile's slime to the Local Board! Not a word more; light your pipe. Anon a vegetarian repast awaits us. Charmion, don't forget to feed my pet alligator, and put a clean piece of yellow ribbon round its neck in honour of this occasion.

(*She lolls back in throne smoking a cigarette, whilst* ANTONY *fills his pipe. As scene proceeds they become more and more colloquial,—if possibly more modern.*)

III.—A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM

(Revised by H–nry Arth–r J–n–s.)

INTRODUCTION

ALTHOUGH it is with a glow of satisfaction that I view the present popularity of a fellow-worker—William Shakespeare—in the same vineyard as myself (for what the English Drama would have done without Shakespeare and J–n–s is too terrible to contemplate); yet it is daily borne in upon me that the plays of the Elizabethan dramatist would gain largely in educational value were they put into modern dress. I have striven laboriously, ever since I took orders in the church of St. Thespis, to educate my fellow-creatures both in and out of season. It is to the theatre rather than to the ordinary church that we should look for moral enlightenment. Let us hasten, therefore, to remove the pulpit from the ordinary church or chapel into the theatre. I have ever held with Matthew Arnold—who was a highly intelligent man—that war must be waged against the

Philistine. In the present play I have discarded blank verse almost entirely, feeling convinced that, even when of superior quality, it fails to attract nowadays—as the run of *The Tempter* conclusively proved.

ACT V.

SCENE. — *London residence of the* DUKE OF ATHENSBERY. *Double drawing-room, back part fitted up as a miniature stage. Window overlooking public square, where statues of our leading dramatists occupy conspicuous positions. All appointments show great refinement and culture. On table lies a book entitled* '*Lectures on the English Drama.*' *Time,* 11 *p.m. A summer evening. Discover* DUKE, *his wife the* DUCHESS DRUSILLYTA, *and guests, amongst whom are the famous millionaire* MR. CYRUS BLENKARN, *the brilliant Nonconformist preacher,* Rev. JUDAH LLEWELLYN, *etc.*

DUKE (*concluding a short but brilliant discourse on Imagination, illustrated by allusions to the lunatic, the dramatic critic, and the Philistine*). Such are the vagaries of the Philistine's imagination that 'On Exchange imagining some fear, How easy

is a "bull" suppos'd a "bear"!' (*All laugh.*) But enough of caustic satire. The question is, How shall we pass away the time before supper? (*Addresses private secretary*) You have the agenda of amusements? Ah! thanks. (*Reads*) '"The Bold Bad Cleric"—recitation by Michael Faversham.' No; that's been overdone. (*Reads again*) 'A dialectical moral scene of young Carteret and his love Felicia.' That will do capitally.

JUDAH LLEWELLYN (*confidentially*). Don't you think a mystic séance would be better? Now, my wife Vashti——

CYRUS BLENKARN (*impatiently*). Excuse me, but something with a dramatic flavour would be better. (*Seizing hold of a coffee-cup*) Ah! I have found it (*exultantly*)—I have found the secret. Where is my Mary——?

FOOTMAN (*pompously*). If you have halluded to my young woman, sir, Mary, she's engaged to me, Hi 'aving tendered a proposition fraught with matrimonial consequences at our ball the other night. (*Changes his tone to hoarse, threatening whisper*) So git it. I can do melodrama as well as you, my boy, although you may call me a lackey. *Your* Mary! If she's yours, why——

DUKE. What's the matter, James?

FOOTMAN (*instantly changing his manner*). I was trying to prevail on Mr. Blenkarn, Your Grace, to have a liqueur with his coffee.

JUDAH LLEWELLYN (*who has been wandering about in a dreamy manner with an empty liqueur-glass in his hand*). I hear voices—I am always hearing voices.

MRS. VASHTI LLEWELLYN (*snappishly*). What can you expect if you will mix your wines? I really think that as President of the Band of Hope——

DUKE. Ladies and gentlemen, I am sorry to interrupt the conversation, but the private theatricals are about to begin. This little sketch is full of tragical mirth.

(*Guests seat themselves, some in attitude of boredom, others with cynical smile so feared by amateurs. Curtain withdrawn in back drawing-room.*)

MRS. SANE'S PRETENCE; OR, CARTERET AND HIS LOVE FELICIA.

(*A well-furnished interior.*)

MRS. SANE (*mournfully*). I try to keep it up, but they distrust me. I flirt outrageously with married men, but everyone at Frittermere looks

incredulous. I smoke, or try to, and the fast girls only jeer. I'm sure they know my life has been different from theirs.

Enter LORD SENTENTIOUS, *a famous lawyer.*

LORD SENTENTIOUS. Cheer up, my dear; I will clear you of this odious imputation.

MRS. SANE (*staring glassily at a supposititious gallery*). Thank you so much. You know I'm really fast, and not the quiet, homely, virtuous woman they would make me out. Why, Mrs. Raventry has actually declared she heard that I lived on the utmost good terms with my husband; she even—can I say it? (*hysterically*) — declares that I loved him. You don't believe it?

LORD SENTENTIOUS. Of course not. (*Pause.*) I must admit, to be quite frank, that when I first saw you smoke I *did* think you seemed a little new to it; and—forgive the suspicion—when you flicked Mr. Raventry with your fan the other night, it seemed to me you didn't care for that sort of thing.

MRS. SANE (*feverishly*). But now you believe? You have my confession that I was divorced three times, not to mention——

LORD SENTENTIOUS. Yes, you seem every-

thing the modern dramatic heroine should be. (*Looks through papers.*) Ah—um! There's just one point.

MRS. SANE (*aside*). He guesses. (*Aloud*) Oh! I've such dreadful toothache; please excuse me. Earache is so painful.

LORD SENTENTIOUS (*sharply*). Earache! You said toothache.

MRS. SANE. Oh, you are so dreadfully clever! Such a silly mistake of mine. I wouldn't *dare* deceive you.

LORD SENTENTIOUS (*complacently*). It *would* be a useless proceeding with a stage lawyer. Now, answer this. You speak of the Judge of the Divorce Court as *Sir Henry Hawkins*. Is this a joke or a blunder?

MRS. SANE (*faintly, clasping her head as if it were in danger of dropping off*). A joke.

LORD SENTENTIOUS (*fiercely*). Woman, you lie! You've never been in a divorce court. This rôle of a fast woman is all a pretence—a sham. Mrs. Raventry is right. You cannot remain at Frittermere. Why have you done this?

MRS. SANE (*at bay*). Because I saw no chance of making an interesting stage figure otherwise.

LORD SENTENTIOUS (*deliberately*). You're wrong. Don't you see the very novelty? Why, it's just because the woman with the past —the 'three-cornered problem'—had become so stale and conventional that we suspected you were different, and therefore likely to score. I may forgive you; Mr. and Mrs. Raventry never will.

(*Curtain.*)

(*Loud applause.*)

DUKE (*looking at watch*). As it's just midnight, I think the ball might commence.

(*Slow curtain as people file out.*)

IV.—JANE EYRE

(*Revised by Mrs. H–mp–y W–d.*)

AFTER dining with my pupil as usual in Mrs. Fairfax's room, I read to her (which was also usual) characteristic extracts from the works of Chillingworth, J. H. Newman, and the Tübingen critics. It was my duty to acquaint Adele with the leading characteristics of the various theological schools. This would usefully supple-

ment the Goethe for infant readers and the Nietzsche line upon line which had formed our morning study. We were interrupted by the entrance of Mrs. Fairfax, who informed me that Mr. Rochester wished Adele and myself to take tea with him in the drawing-room. Mr. Rochester greeted us with old-fashioned courtesy, but his expression was thoughtful even to weariness.

'Pray be seated, Miss Eyre,' he said.

'Thank you, sir.'

At the word 'sir' he started and flushed a dusky crimson.

'For Heaven's sake don't say "sir" with that strong Yorkshire accent, Miss Eyre! . . . Besides, Rousseau and St. Simon, not to mention later writers (who will be duly discussed and analyzed later on by me in this book), have surely taught us that glorious doctrine of social equality.'

'You are a socialist, then, sir—I mean Rochester?'

He smiled gloomily.

'For a short space, yes. That was the outcome of my last psychological crisis. But I have been through many crises. During the last six weeks I have been in rapid succession

a Freethinker, a Catholic, Dissenter, Individualist, Socialist.'

'Precisely my own experience,' I replied.

He interrupted me with a cry of anger.

'Miss Eyre, surely it is understood we must never pass through the same psychological crisis at the same time. From the standpoint of powerful characterization it would ruin all effective contrast. Call me "sir" every two minutes if you like, but don't tell me you, too, are a socialist.'

I saw he was a very worthy man in his way, but singularly lacking in humour, and addicted to clever but strenuous dialogue, and so with great skill I turned the current of the conversation.

* * * * *

That evening I was sitting up late discussing Schopenhauer with Mrs. Fairfax, when a terrible scream rang through the house. It came from the library. I rushed in, and found Mr. Rochester lying on the floor in a dead faint. His clenched fist held some sort of card. I lowered my candle, and discovered it to be my membership ticket of the Fabian Society. Then I understood.

* * * * *

The next day I found him bent on going to Italy in search of fresh local colour.

'Miss Eyre,' he said firmly, 'we have exhausted the possibilities of English provincial life. I have secured rooms at Florence and Rome, and in future you must regard me as a sceptic, with an æsthetic admiration for the ritual of the Roman Church.'

'And for myself?' I inquired.

'You must be a Catholic convert in love with me.' His eye brightened at the thought of future dialectics. 'Then, I think,' he resumed, growing more enthusiastic, 'that a strong Protestant friend—say a Low Church-woman—should come and stay with us.'

'Also in love with you?' I suggested.

'Well, it would give a pleasing emotional background to the theological wrangles. Now pack up, my child. Mrs. Fairfax will, according to arrangement, develop Socinian sympathies, and,' he added cheerfully, 'possibly little Adele will, later on, become a Positivist.'

V.—THE EGOIST

(*Revised by R–dy–rd K–pl–ng.*)

'I am the very pattern of a modern Major-General.'
Old Bab-bish Room Ballad.

'I CHUCKED him out. Such young cubs are insufferable.'

That is what Vernon Whitford said as he looked across at Sir Willoughby Patterne.

'Who was it?' asked Willoughby with a languid air.

'Crossjay. The silly young swine has taken to parodying us all lately. This infernal monkey trick of imitation is becoming too frequent among young fellows nowadays.'

'Um!' said Willoughby, flicking the ash off his cigar, 'you take a horsewhip, my dear Vernon, to wreak vengeance on a gnat. The ear of my soul is tickled pleasantly by the high-pitched drone of imitation. Verbal missiles flung by intellectual imps scarce dimple the surface of the philosophic mind. You follow?'

'D——n it!' cried Vernon, 'you'll drive me mad if you always talk like that! Man alive, can't you use good, plain, full-blooded Saxon English, like most of us do? I've been

in India lately among the hills. All of us like plain tales there, except good-looking grass widows. Your style of talk is going out of fashion. Folks won't stand it nowadays. You can turn me out of the house if you like, but speak I must. A word more. For weeks past you and Clara Middleton have been indulging in wordy gymnastics. She's tired of you; you know that. Now, that sentimental girl with the lashes—Laetitia Thingumabob—is dead nuts on you. Well, marry her. Bring the story to an end. For Heaven's sake be more definite and colloquial!'

Sir Willoughby was silent. It had occurred to him of late to question whether a faculty for epigram and for self-analysis was quite the thing. Perhaps to show a technical acquaintance with the parts of a sailing vessel, or a motor-car, or a torpedo. . . . Yes, yes.

Vernon saw he had made an impression.

'My dear chap,' he said, giving Willoughby a clap on the shoulder that made him wince, 'get a Civil Service appointment in India. India,' resumed Vernon, lighting his pipe and throwing the match on the Turkey carpet, 'the land for magnesium literary effects; the gossip of the Western Club smoking-room, and

the customs of the East—slang, mysticism, May-fair flirtations set in an Oriental framework. Great Scott! what more do you want?'

'Go on, my son!' exclaimed Colonel de Craye, sauntering up at this moment. The Colonel had Irish blood in his veins. 'Kape it up!' he said. 'I'm rale glad ye've dhrawn the par-ti-cu-lar attinshin av Sir——'

Sir Willoughby got up.

'Abuse I am inured to,' he said, 'also swearing, which is a mental alternative for spitting . . . but brogue——'

He shuddered and withdrew. He proceeded to the end of the passage, where he found Dr. Middleton seated on the floor with a bottle of his famous wine in his hand. He had evidently bribed the butler and——

The doctor rose to his feet unsteadily and smiled in a sickly way. Willoughby struggled between his penchant for intellectual word-play and an elemental inclination to ring for his footman to sweep him up.

'Æschylus,' began the doctor in a husky voice, 'not t' menshon Eurip — rip — Eu — Eu——'

'Very much ugh!' said Willoughby angrily. 'How dare you go in for this farcical folly,

Middleton, the rudeness of which is only balanced by its crudeness!'

* * * * *

Sir Willoughby married Laetitia. His nerves had been upset, and by mistake he acted promptly.

Which seems rough on Laetitia.

VI.—PRIDE AND PREJUDICE

(*Revised by R. S. H–ch–ns, Author of 'The Slave,' etc.*)

It was the evening of the Netherfield Ball. The majority of the male guests had carefully woven inverted commonplaces into embroidered epigrams. However, they looked pretty enough at a distance; the truisms of life alone bear close scrutiny. Mrs. Bennett was in her element; in searching for eligible *partis*, her fondness for high game was as well known as her partiality for low dress. Her appearance bespoke a massive impropriety; but she was, in reality, hopelessly respectable. Rumour had even hinted that she and her husband were vulgar enough to 'make it up' after a quarrel. His adherence to domestic virtues had long

since placed him beyond the pale of social toleration. A man who loved his home was clearly capable of any crime. As evening wore on, the brilliant paradoxes flagged. One youth had been so overcome in concocting a *bon mot* during the barn dance that for the next half-hour he was quite unaffected, greatly to the alarm of his friends. Two men were conversing earnestly at the far end of the ballroom.

'The flow of wit is ebbing,' muttered Darcy, raising his shaggy eyebrows.

'Wit cannot survive lobster *mayonnaise*,' replied Bingley. 'But hang it, man, why aren't you dancing? Look at that charming girl, Miss Elizabeth Bennett!'

Both men gazed in the direction of the girl. She was watching the entrance door; her eyes glittered brightly, and upon her parted red lips trembled the faint, mysterious moisture of some secret expectation.

'Can you read her face?' said Darcy hoarsely. 'She's dreaming of supper; her soul is communing with the spirit of Gunter's. You thought it idealism—wait!'

'Better cut in with your show now,' said Bingley coldly. 'The supper interval affords opportunity for your mystic *séance*.'

Darcy stepped forward.

'Ladies and gentlemen,' he said, 'please attend!'

Whilst speaking he kept his eye upon Elizabeth Bennett, who, at first resentful, was gradually fascinated by his odd demeanour.

'I have,' continued Darcy, with a nondescript foreign accent, such as popular Illusionists affect, 'spent many years in Eastern travel with the famous Charliz Bertramuz—Bingley, a little music, please—and during this time have made the acquaintance of many wild, esoteric mysteries. I took shares in the Re-Incarnation agency, which was to make the fortune of the short story. By this Re-Incarnation process, through which the most startling and most marked results could be attained, I could show, for example, how ordinary human beings could be turned into Society Lions. Of late, I have penetrated the inmost recesses of the Mystic Hall of Egypt, where the High Pontiff offered me many shekels of gold, could I but fathom his rites.'

Whilst speaking, Darcy turned up his cuffs with a graceful, sinuous movement. Then he advanced towards Elizabeth Bennett, and dex-

terously produced a *pâté de foie gras* from the flowers at her bosom.

'Near your heart, madam,' said Darcy, looking hard at her.

Meanwhile, Bingley had merged from 'The Rose of Persia' into a modern chansonette by that virtuoso, Chevalier, where the beguiling effect upon the organ of sight, exercised by manual celerity, is touchingly described.

'What with drawing-room *diablerie* and epigram-mania,' said Darcy, producing a rabbit from Mrs. Bennett's fan, 'we will make an impression in the neighbourhood.'

VII.—THE PICKWICK PAPERS

(Revised by R. Le G–ll–ne.)

THE young man emerged from the Lane of Vigo and wandered over Bodleian pastures, where the verdure is flecked with yellow. 'The age demands a new Pickwick,' he murmured; 'a Pickwick from which all bourgeois views of life and foolish banalities have been eliminated. Yes, I will transform this uncouth Beast into a fairy Prince. 'Twill be a pretty Prose-fancy and worthy of a fresh paragraph.'

See! the gaitered gentleman approaches. 'Tarry awhile, good sir, if indeed thou art desirous of attaining a celebrity rarer and more enduring than the vulgar popularity thou once enjoyed amongst the mob. Give me those spectacles which do but magnify the ineptitudes of the lower middle-class, and put on these rose-tinted glasses of mine. Through them even the hard things of life become as rose-rock. Lo! I am an adept in the art of literary confections, and know full well how to change the saccharine drops of fancy into rainbow-coloured delicacies far exceeding Pascall's purest-edible-thoughts. True, this idea of a change is not quite original; for I wot that the low, flashy youth Aladdin participated in a lamp-exchange, and I know (for the very name of Grundy is dear to me) that Benjamine Goldfinch—— Yet, why excuse myself? What, after all, is originality but a pose? As for me, my literary youth has known a Sterne up-bringing; I have supped frequently off Lamb, and suffered from attacks of Quincey. But enough—will you?' With characteristic good-humour, Mr. Pickwick accepted the rose-tinted glasses. Instantly clusters of curls crept over his once bald head, his rotund figure became Apollo-like, and even

the gaiters blossomed into beauty. Mr. Pickwick smiled dreamily, and a pucker crept into his Alastor-like brow.

'The Pilgrimage,' he murmured. 'Oh yes! the Quest of the Brazen Jingle.'

He took a parcel from his pocket, and looked furtively at its contents. Therein lay a shirt and a pair of socks, which once hung sun-kissed upon a hotel clothes-line. He had purchased them—meaning to track the owner—from a youth named Trotter, to whom they had been given by the miscreant Jingle. At this moment the Rev. Mr. Stiggins, from Zion Chapel, a young Nonconformist visionary of poetical aspect and advanced social theories, came hurrying along.

Yet, indeed, beneath the marble serenity of brow, the blue veins were pulsing with eager life. The wife of his deacon Anthony Weller loved him. And he knew it—in a sense, he gloried in it. Yet were his intentions as pure as the almond icing on a birthday-cake. He only welcomed this passion inasmuch as it coloured his life with romance. He was tender towards her, and in a brotherly way had stroked her hand with that pitying, platonic smile which he could command so well. Yet, ever and

anon Anthony Weller's point of view flashed upon him. Might he not suspect? Ay, and with his gross Philistine instinct misinterpret the hand-stroking?

It was natural he should seek for Samuel Pickwick, for the idyll of Goswell Street had reached him. He knew he would find a ready sympathizer, so shifted his rose-tinted glasses. Everyone wore rose-tinted glasses. It is a fell mistake to view life in all its crudeness.

Unhappily, in his desire to grasp the hand of the philosopher, he tripped over a nasty sharp fact and fell into Mr. Pickwick's arms. This encounter ended 'The Life Romantic,' and as they both wore rose-tinted glasses, their spectacles were shaken off.

'Bless my soul!' cried Mr. Pickwick, regaining his well-known 'phiz.'

Mr. Stiggins' countenance, moreover, now suggested pineapple rum rather than poetry. The young man advanced.

'Put on your glasses,' he cried in disgust. 'Just as they were getting on so well,' he groaned. At that moment an explosive Wellerism, fired at a distance from a newcomer, hit him full on the brow. Vainly did he try to protect himself with a piece of sugar-candy

wrapped up in an epigram. 'I cannot understand that odious Cockney,' he murmured, then fled to his own particular Star, where he wrote tragic fairy tales with a pen dipped in treacle, singing thus to himself dreamily:

Pen trifles poet; let who will be serious
Beat fine your fancies, and dilute where strong,
Thus making problems wherewith sages weary us,
A sweetmeat song.

VIII.—TOM JONES

(Revised by S–las H–ck–ng, author of 'Such is Life,' etc.)

BOOK I.—INFANCY.

O, that, like honey laden bees,
We human creatures spent our days
In deeds mellifluous.—*Watts-on.*

CHAPTER I.—'*First the Babe.*'

MR. ALLWORTHY walked back from the lecture wrapt in thought. This frame of mind was partly the result of a hearty dinner, partly due also to the lecturer's references to the poet Longfellow. How true it was that we also 'can make our lives sublime'! Was his life sublime? He had doubts. On reaching home

he discovered a baby sleeping peacefully in the umbrella-stand. Mr. Allworthy smiled. Here was a distinct chance of proving sublime. Everything has its small beginnings.

'Deborah,' he said to his Cornish housekeeper, 'I will adopt this child.'

'Lor' 'a mercy!' cried she in unexceptional dialect. 'Ef we doo——'

Then, seeing the heroic expression on Mr. Allworthy's face, she relapsed into silence.

BOOK II.—YOUTH.

All who live to be old have, perforce, once been young.—*Plât-y-Tûd.*

CHAPTER I.—*Can it be Fate?*

Tom Jones used to lunch at an A B C with his friend Blifil. But lately, alas! he had frequented places where smarter-looking waitresses served.

'I,' said Blifil, 'prefer the coffee and scone obtainable at the A B C. Moreover, it's cheaper.'

'Oh, hang the expense!' cried Tom.

The fever of the spendthrift had possessed him. One day, passing along the Strand, he smelt Irish stew. It came from a restaurant

where he had often foolishly dallied with a waitress called Molly. So, instead of reading *Self-Help* at lunch, he went in for smiles of another kind. And now the strength of the onions mastered him. On the stormy sea of Life our little crafts are often upset by the existence of leaks. Suddenly a man close by said to his companion, 'Why not stop the war?' It came upon Tom like a mighty inspiration, suggesting such possibilities of debating society speeches that the memory of Molly became faint.

It is well to teach the young idea—*not* the young eye—how to shoot.

BOOK III.—MANHOOD.

The margarine of mild romance.—*Centy Mentall.*

CHAPTER I.—*The A B C of Love.*

Tom Jones was in love with Sophia Western, daughter of the Rev. Trefusa Western, a country parson of quiet and simple habits. He had loved her through many chapters, but as he had a habit of seeming to prefer someone else, nothing had as yet come of it. But towards the end of the novel a big love scene was inevitable. He met her near the Law Courts.

'Sophy!' he cried. 'You!'

'Yes,' she said; 'I love to hear the pigeons cooing of peace.'

'Always poetical,' he said tenderly. 'But come and have lunch at the A B C.'

So they went in, and he ordered eggs and cut bread-and-butter for two.

'Sophy,' he murmured, 'I have loved you for years. Be mine.'

Affected by his manly simplicity, she blushingly faltered:

'Yes, Tom, I will.'

So they were very happy, and the author was happy, and the publishers and public also were happy. Such is life.

IX.—VANITY FAIR

(*By H–ll C–ne.*)

PREFACE

In undertaking this revision, I have been influenced by the earnest, though hitherto unexpressed, desire of the public to see Vanity Fair reset in a Caine framework. Feeling deeply as I do the paramount importance of flaring and glaring actualities, I have substituted for the campaign in Belgium the war in South

Africa. Having, however, no personal acquaintance with military movements or with Bohemian society, I have supplemented my imperfect knowledge of the one by a consultation of old Blue Books and the 'Yellow' press, and my knowledge of the other by a like study of old Yellow Books and the 'Blue' press; whilst in many passages I am conscious that I have been as the mould through which the sapling of fiction, throbbing with potential circulation, has sent its shoots upward towards the limelight of popularity.

Chapter LIII.

When Rawdon arrived at his house in Kensington, he stopped short and trembled at the possibilities of local colour which the scene suggested: the brilliant lights in the drawing-room; dawdling sandwich-men with flaming placards of 'The Manxman'; an organ jangling 'When we are married' from 'The Belle of New York.'

After he had sufficiently realized the dramatic character of the scene, he took out his latchkey and entered the house. The rich contralto laughter of Becky floated down the stairs as

Lord Steyne shouted out the last verse of 'The Absent-minded Beggar.'

Steyne! The very word had an unfriendly sound, enough to infuriate a patriot like Captain Crawley. Mounting the stairs, he stood for a few moments on the mat, meditating upon the most effective entrance he could make; then he flung open the door. Becky, in evening dress, was sitting on the sofa explaining to Lord Steyne, who stood by her side, that he had sung Kipling's song at least a note flat. Becky looked at Rawdon, then rose to her feet.

'Rawdon,' she said with that maddening, bewitching smile which he knew so well, 'don't storm. I have merely been teaching Lord Steyne how to sing "The Absent-minded Beggar."'

Rawdon laughed savagely.

'My contribution to the "Pay,"' he said, then flung with steady aim at Lord Steyne's head a copy of the *Review of Reviews*.

The unfair character of the missile stunned the victim.

'Damn!'* cried Lord Steyne; then, when

* My study of the upper classes has convinced me that this startling expression is actually used in all its terrible nakedness on occasion.—AUTHOR.

he had recognised what a naughty word he had used, he fell senseless to the ground.

Meanwhile Becky had removed her hair-pins, and, with her golden hair hanging down her back, stood beneath the glowing radiance of the electric chandeliers.

'Oh, Rawdon!' she cried, with the true Adelphi ring in her voice, 'don't you remember, dear, those happy days of yore, when you liked my green eyes and I liked your blue stories; when——' (reminiscences served up gushing for several pages).

A terrible anguish filled Rawdon's mind. He couldn't get in a word edgeways. The scene was becoming a monologue; it was horrible. And yet even at this supreme moment there was a suggestion of impropriety about the scene which secretly pleased him.

'Don't say I bore you, darling!' cried Becky.

Ah! the word suggested to Rawdon his cue. The dramatic moment had come when he could tell her that his regiment had been ordered to the front, so, turning on a couple more electric lights for purposes of greater effect, he stated his news briefly in a few thousand words, in which the most highly-coloured adjectives and adverbs only were used.

X.—WUTHERING HEIGHTS

(*Revised by Ell–n Th–rn–ycr–ft F–wl–r.*)

I RANG the bell for Mrs. Dean. No self-respecting person should be beyond the reach of smart dialogue. Its therapeutic value is tremendous, for it stimulates the circulation beyond the dreams of advertisement. When Mrs. Dean entered I regarded her hopefully. There was a self-conscious smile upon her face that augured well for her carefully-thought-out specimens of—unconscious humour which would illuminate succeeding chapters.

'Mrs. Dean,' I said, 'if your scandal-telling is as good as your cookery, I shall have an agreeable time of it. Tell me about my neighbours at Wuthering Heights.'

'That I will, sir,' responded Mrs. Dean, 'though don't forget the hot whisky for your cold. Ah! if poor, dear Dean had paid the same attention to things spiritual as he paid to things spirituous, what a saint he would have made!'

As my good housekeeper seemed lost in a train of thought, I blew my nose as a kind of danger-signal, and the train came to a standstill.

'They're a strange lot at Wuthering Heights,' commented Mrs. Dean. 'I was there for many years—a kind of nurse and cook, though Mr. Heathcliff, he often said that old Joseph beat me at cooking, judging by the way he cooked the domestic accounts. Deary me! Mr. Heathcliff was a one, to be sure! . . . but he *would* talk epigram all day long, and as I did a bit on my own account, and Miss Cathy was brilliant also, it was a depressing place, was Wuthering Heights. Soon no one came near us; we talked our neighbours out of their senses. My husband was a bit nasty about it. "Epigrams," he said, "are like women; they're often nice to look at, but horrid to live with."'

'True, Mrs. Dean,' I put in. 'Besides, a verbal spendthrift comes sooner or later to a logical bankruptcy.'

'That's right, sir; but I pulled up in time. Mr. Heathcliff hailed down so many witticisms as to stun me. Then he rallied me upon my gloom, but I paid him out for it. "I may be sad," said I, "but there's a methodism in my sadness." This quieted him, for he is one of the free and careless kind. Then I must tel you about Miss Cathy, who married Edgar Linton. Oh, she did talk clever! As Heath-

cliff said, "When that girl marries, it'll be Catherine weal or woe." I always wonder she married that poor, soft, delicate Edgar Linton, and at heart so fond of Heathcliff, too. *He* was a strong Britisher, if you like.'

'Perhaps she liked her British weakly,' I hazarded.

'You're a bit feverish, I'm afeard, sir,' said Mrs. Dean. 'Besides, we must rest a bit now, for we've ever so many more chapters to talk through.'

'Quite so, Mrs. Dean; "the rest is silence."'

Then, lighting my bedroom candle with an epigram, I went to bed.

XI.—CRANFORD

(*Revised by M–d–me S–r–h Gr–nd.*)

To Madame Sarah Grand.

[*Madame Sarah Grand has confided to an Editor—anent her favourite diet—that she cannot take milk as she never forgets 'the horrible cow.'*]

O lacteal-loathing Madame Grand,
How did you feed your 'Heavenly Twins'?
If milk from horrid cow you banned—
Well, that explains their youthful sins!

But as a student of your tales,
And mindful of their 'forward' trend,
I'm sure that when milk diet fails,
Strong meat for babes you'd recommend!

THE serenity of Cranford had been pleasantly ruffled. A large poster outside the Assembly Rooms announced an important lecture upon 'The Marriage Problem,' by Mrs. Ideala Beth. Tickets of admission were eagerly sought for, and Signor Brunoni, the world-renowned conjuror, who had secured the rooms for the preceding night, had to be content with an audience consisting chiefly of a few children from the National School.

The eventful evening arrived, and the rooms were crowded. Even Miss Betsy Barker left her favourite Alderney cow for this occasion—horrible looking thing a cow!—whilst Miss Jenkyns, Captain Brown and his daughters—in fact, all the local lights put in an appearance.

'All the "beth" people are here,' observed Captain Brown—it was the first joke he had ever made in Cranford — for which weary witticism he was cut by his neighbours for the next few weeks.

Then the lecture started. Mrs. Ideala Beth was a wonderful woman: handsome, accom-

plished, a clear thinker, a finished speaker; in short, a kind of Girton Venus, with a dash of Hypatia thrown in. And then how telling, how true, and how penetrating her remarks! Marriage, she said, was often a failure. It *might* be tolerable, were it not for the men. (Captain Brown began to wish he hadn't come.) Good-looking men were especially unreliable (applause from some elderly spinsters), more particularly when they had white teeth set too far apart (Captain Brown, who had lost most of his teeth, now felt easier), or when their eyes were of a gray-green colour. At this point the rural postman suddenly beat a retreat, followed by indignant scowls from the ladies, who mentally resolved to give up postcards as a means of correspondence. Altogether, the lecture was a great success. Some of the men spoke rudely about it; but then men, as a rule, are such dull-witted, ill-tempered brutes.

As a result of the lecture, Miss Jenkyns inaugurated a series of physiological teas, at which delicate questions relating to sex were cheerfully discussed over muffins. Miss Jessie Brown had quite a tiff with the Rector because he would not publish her essay on 'How to Appraise a Man's Character from his Teeth: a

Study in Molars and Morals,' in the parish magazine.

Birthday books with quotations from Huxley and Carpenter became the fashion. Of course, a few foolish, conventional people objected to all these changes, and at a debate, where it was carried by a large majority 'that the novel be turned into a medical tract,' Miss Betsy Barker voted with the minority; but what else could be expected from a person who had a favourite cow?

XII.—THE VICAR OF WAKEFIELD

(*Revised by M–r–e C–rel–i.*)

Do you know what it is to be an English parson? Not the sleek, well-fed town Vicar, with a dozen curates to do all the work whilst he simmers in his own oleaginous rectitude, and draws a substantial income for droning out a twenty minutes' collection of platitudes. Not him, ah no! by the soul of English Grammar, not him! But rather he who, immured in the bat-flapping solitude of a secluded country village, superintends not only the spiritual and

moral welfare of the people, but verily also the care of their bodies.

Well, reader, I am such a one. Scorning the senseless, unnatural, and vice-breeding practices of the Romish Church — a Church which, though I am by nature inclined to respect and revere all that appeals to the imagination, the refined sensibility, and the most exquisite mental palate—yet, even I feel towards this detestable moral-miasmic communion. . . . But I must look at things more calmly and more grammatically, otherwise I shall never be able to tell my story in the five million words into which I have tried to condense it.

Being an English parson, I am married. So much to my credit. As to the Church of which I am a member, it has only lately been borne in upon me that churches of all kinds, like reviewers, are never to be distrusted, but rather to be despised. Yet, at this time I was weak enough to respect my calling, and even partook at the evening meal of the vintages of gooseberry, *cuvée reservée*, little heeding the thousands who were obliged to drink ordinary champagne, after which I listened to the brilliant artistic display of talent exhibited by my family.

My family! Ah, what pathos, what potentiality of quarterly accounts lies in that word! The English homestead? Even to-day, when all are well married and disposed of, the word thrills as no other word can. It sends me into a condition of hysterics and asterisks, from which my publisher can alone arouse me.

My two daughters, Olivia and Sophia, were exquisite specimens of English girlhood. Count Burchell, who wooed my eldest girl before the detested Cardinal Thornhill came on the scene, thus wrote of her the day when he first espied her when she was playing Chopin so brilliantly at the Penny Readings:

'I have seen the Vicar's daughter . . . seen, if such a vision of dazzling loveliness is purely a matter of sense impression . . . may it not be a kind of spiritual electricity that sends its psychic searchlight into the penetralia of the human soul? . . . I saw her as she sat on a wooden chair, raised up by bound volumes of music—playing—playing! Ah! do not let me say playing. It was a kind of celestial manipulation of earthly media. She was dressed in pale pink, with that artlessness of fit and that amazing and divine simplicity only found in home-made dresses, and fostered by

female adepts in the art of "turning." As I basked into the cerulean depths of her wonderful eyes, I was dizzy, disturbed, stricken with soul-sickening longing to turn over the pages for her. Nothing but the knowledge that I was a tyro in musical matters and had never made any public appearance, except as Bones in a school troop of minstrels—nothing save that deterred me.'

* * * * *

These, of course, be lovers' raptures, though a father cannot feel aught but proud when his daughter—— Ah! then, of course, I mustn't forget Sophia. She, in her way, was equally beautiful; one had the glory of noon, the other of summer twilight about her.

Sophia was less brilliant, and yet beneath the quiet exterior there lurked a deep, seething, consuming, and imperishable passion to write novels, with a purpose. This I encouraged, as it is so rarely found in young girls, and shows the possession, as a rule, of great genius.

I dearly loved the subject of matrimony myself, and when in the pulpit my greatest feats of oratory concerned themselves with this great topic. I may say here, perhaps, that I have a natural aptitude for eloquence and for

rhetoric, beside which Hooker, Jeremy Taylor, and ancient divines speak but the baldest prose.

But deeply though I respect the married state, I was not so happy as many supposed in my own. But enough. Let me be a man, and thrust back the cold-eyed snake of suspicion that sent its poisoned fang into the glowing confidence. Suffice it to say, reader, that I agreed with William Whiston that it was unlawful to re-marry, or, as the poet says, once mordantly grasped by the molars and incisors, twice bashfully reticent.

ECHOES

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AN ENGLISH PARODIST'S LOVE-LETTERS

Explanation.

These parodies were written for purposes of publication. Even the urgent request of the writer's best friends have not prevented him from printing them. They point so obvious a moral to brother-parodists that the author feels it as all-commanding upon him to give the letters to the world.

The story that echoes through the following pages shows how hopelessly the author has fallen under the influence of certain eminent writers. When at length he shakes off this influence, he finds to his horror that he is inarticulate. So long has he imitated the method and style of others that he has no longer any style of his own: he has become a mechanical

mocking-bird. Therein lies the tragedy; for a man who cannot write a natural love-letter must give up the rôle of lover.

Letter I.

(*Written under the influence of G–rge M–r–d–th.*)

Beloved,

With this letter lies overt the first page of the scented volume of love. Its passionate perfume narcotizes my soul with verbal-tone pictures, and drives me with its harmonious discords into polysyllabic conceits. There is an obscurity, dearest (if, mayhap, obscure I may seem), which arises from excess of light. On the sensitized brain of the ordinary soul this super-radiance is registered as shadow, and, indeed, develops as such. You, beloved, would scorn such a negative test.

And now to psalm the praises of Cupid, who liketh not the naked, unattractive highway that leadeth direct to wedding-bells, but glorieth, Ariel-like, in the intricate byways of intellectual, magic-loving ordeals, while shunning marriages that are not amazing. And now, dearest, take a deep breath, for I am about to enter upon a

glittering sea of metaphors, and goodness knows when a full-stop will arrest my declamatory barque. To-night I opened my casement (there is no window in my room), while mine ears drank in—Nature has been kind in gifts aural—the bitter-sweet passion song of the nightingale, which entranceth my soul with the value of archaic words and recondite phrases, albeit somewhat sense-betwisted from the natural meaning accorded them by the upper-shelf haunting dictionary, maddeneth my heart with such an ecstasy as the gods feel who, looking down upon the stage of life, rejoice in the pantomimic vagaries of low comedians gallery-espied—somewhere in the Lane of Existence; greeteth my body (my soul and heart have already been disposed of) with some chance catarrh (that I super-gladly suffer), which, clasping my throat in its ardent embrace, or whispering in sibilous periods to the penetralia of the bronchi—— Dearest, heart of my heart, I have lost my place, and where my original nominative was, alas! I wot not. So farewell. The fount must cease to flow; inspiration has become siccate.

* * * * *

LETTER V.

MY OWN,

Surely you are a trifle hard. It is true that my letters hitherto have been written under the influence of writers like Meredith, Hardy, D'Annunzio, and finally Mr. Dooley. Ownest, why complain? Does not this give a variety to the letters they would otherwise lack? Think of a budget of love-letters all in the *same* key and from the *same* standpoint! As my friend Lieutenant Dunstable says, this is like having toffee always. Nay, dearest of dear dears, too much of Love's saccharine phrases produces a spiritual biliousness. I thought that a Dooley love-letter might act as a tonic. But it hasn't. Oh, lovey-dovey!

LETTER VI.

DARLING,

You are unreasonable. You ask me to write naturally, without reference to anyone else's style. With shame I confess it. I can't —that is, unless I may fill up with lovey-dovey, which you don't like. It may be a silly term, but it is sanctioned by convention. Well, there

is nothing left out. Good-bye. Oh, you silly icky!—Beg pardon, dear. So long. If I ever marry, it will be a skit-tish girl.

MRS. BARDELL FROM A NEW STANDPOINT

In many free libraries Dickens is read to the exclusion of George Eliot. In order to encourage the study of George Eliot, why not wrap up in the jam of Pickwick, say, the earnest and erudite philosophy of George Eliot? Thus:

'Mrs. Bardell,' said Mr. Pickwick at last, as that amiable female approached the termination of a prolonged dusting of the apartment, during which occupation she had studied fitfully from a manuscript book.

'Sir,' said Mrs. Bardell, giving a hasty glance over her notes on the last Local Extension lecture on Dante.

'Your little boy is a very long time gone.'

'There are many bookshops on the way to the Borough, sir,' remarked Mrs. Bardell, 'and being a student (School Board, fifth standard, though, as a youthful Positivist, he takes ad-

vantage of the conscience clause)—being a student, I say, he holds with Petrarca, *Libri medullitus delectant*—— Are you asleep, Mr. Pickwick?'

'Eh?' said Mr. Pickwick, starting up, 'asleep? Certainly not. I was only beginning to wonder when I came in.'

'Talking of coming in,' resumed Mrs. Bardell dreamily, 'are you interested in the redemption, the restoration, of the Jewish nation?'

Mr. Pickwick rubbed his chin thoughtfully.

'I have a friend—Mr. Micawber by name—who is, I believe, interested in redemption *from* the Jewish nation; but I wish to ask you——'

At this point Mrs. Bardell, whose active mind, embracing as it did an intelligent though roving interest in theology, philosophy, science, history, and art, had reverted to her youthful offspring, interrupted her lodger.

'I could wish,' said Mrs. Bardell, 'that my son was more careful about the purity of his native tongue. He must read Dante's tract, "De la nobile Volgare Eloquenza," which Dr. Blimber, our lecturer says——'

'Excuse me,' interrupted Mr.

blandly, 'you are not allowing me a proper share in the conversation in this chapter. If you refer to the original text you will find that long ere this I should have asked, "Do you think it a much greater expense to keep two people than to keep one?"'

'From the standpoint of political economy,' replied Mrs. Bardell, who belonged to the London School of Economics, 'I must admit, as Mr. Felix Holt, the I.L.P. candidate——'

'Never mind Mr. Holt,' put in Mr. Pickwick hastily. 'He once made some ill-considered remarks about alcohol. What do you think?'

'I prefer,' said Mrs. Bardell, 'to look at it solely from the point of duty. Is it a duty to keep two people? Sometimes the feeling comes over me, when the baker sends in his bill, that I should like to follow the dictates of my heart and pay, but,' pursued Mrs. Bardell in a voice of suppressed emotion, 'I see, I feel, that it is a mistake to do so. How could I keep my son supplied with sweetmeats if I paid my tradesmen? I see this clearly: I must not, cannot, seek my own happiness by sacrificing others. Each of us must renounce something in life; it is my duty to renounce creditors.'

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ing. 'I will look at his desk. I know where his keys are.'

The desk was duly opened, and a bundle of papers disclosed themselves.

'Love-letters!' gasped the girl. 'Oh, Lulu! it's too good to be true. At last, my opportunity! No—too bad: they're *my own.* He has kept mine. It is simply scandalous. Ah! here's something that looks like bills.'

'You've found it at last,' said Lulu; 'depend on it, he's deeply in debt — speculates — gambles.'

'Well, that's better than nothing,' said the girl, a little mollified, as she turned over the pieces of paper. Then she uttered a piercing cry, and fell down in a swoon.

Lulu glanced hastily at the bills. *They were all receipted.*

'The man is infamous,' she muttered indignantly. 'If married men won't live up, at any rate, in some small measure, to modern fiction, how can they expect neurotic and hysterical women to be happy?'

II.—HIS TRAGEDY.

(A Melodrama for Journalists.)

For many weeks past he had buried himself in his study for hours at a time. When he emerged it was with face blanched, with cheeks hollow, and with weary, dark-rimmed eyes. His quick, yet furtive, steps, his nervous horror when someone came to the front door, bespoke the attitude of a man haunted by some dread secret. Sometimes he hurried along the streets, rare though these excursions were; his lips would frame words, though no sound came forth. Literary men of his acquaintance nodded sympathetically, and he was referred to as 'Poor Penman.'

But his anxious young wife—ah! there lay the tragedy—knew nothing of the why and wherefore of Penman's altered looks.

'Would he keep his nasty bother from his little wifey?' she said, with a touching simplicity of diction that cynics would have termed imbecile.

'Tush, child!' he would say, stroking her glossy hair. 'Let me bear it by myself. Why should I streak your sunshine with shadow?'

This was prettily put, but then it might be expected from a man who had edited a volume of *Bacon!* She drew herself proudly up to her full stature (5 feet 4 inches), for she knew intuitively that when a man gets to the 'Tush!' stage, something tragic is about to happen.

'Lionel,' she said, 'I have a right to know. What are you doing which has changed you from a bright, happy-hearted literary man to a melancholy, dazed, lifeless creature?'

'Cynthia,' he said, 'you shall know. I am —have been—for the last few weeks *a reviewer of Christmas books!*'

She stood dumfounded; her narrow butterfly intelligence could not grasp the awful import of that confession.

'Lionel,' she said, with sudden determination, 'I must share this burden with you. I, your wife, your partner, must and will take a part, and'—she hesitated—'if they are *readable*, dear, a large part.'

He seized her by the wrist.

'Child—woman!' he hissed, 'never use that word "readable" to my face. In the sacred name of Mudie, don't torture me with the adjectival poverty of the English language. The words "readable," "seasonable," are not

to be breathed in this house; and if you dare to say that a book is "eminently calculated to please both old and young," I will lock you up for a month in a room with a pile of books "suitable for prizes." So take care—beware!'

There was a ring at the front door. The man turned with an agonizing look of apprehension. A servant entered.

'A package of books for you, sir.'

Throwing up his hands with a wild scream, Lionel fled from the house.

THE PROFESSOR AND THE AUTUMN 'CREEPER'

(*With apologies to Mr. R. S. Hichens, àpropos of his fascinating volume, 'Tongues of Conscience.'*)

The Professor was standing in the doorway as I passed along Berkeley Street. When my gaze alighted upon his parchment face and keen gray eyes, I rushed up and seized him by the hand.

'My dear fellow,' I said, 'delighted to see you!'

He stared coldly.

'May I ask——' he began.

'What need of introduction?' I replied warmly. 'Am I not on the lookout for a short story—creepy kind—and are you not the illustrious eternal Professor, absolutely indispensable for that kind of tale?'

He looked mollified.

'Now,' said I, taking his arm and entering the hall, 'I will dine with you. No objection, please; in short stories formalities must be dispensed with. By the way, you have no beautiful daughter, nor charming ward, nor victims for vivisection? No!'

I tapped a small door under the staircase inquiringly.

'A boot cupboard,' said the Professor dryly.

'Good. Excellent. These realistic touches greatly help a modern creepy story. Ah! I see dinner is just ready. Thank you, I'll sit opposite.'

We had dinner. Whilst toying with the fruit, the Professor said:

'Excuse the absence of carnivorous food. Never touch meat—hate it.'

I felt strangely thoughtful, and left soon after.

The next day I reached the Professor's house *after* dinner. He was taking coffee, and I

thought looked rather worried. This made me happy; the short story seemed promising.

'Don't tell me I'm uninvited,' I said. 'I knew it. Tell me, in the sacred name of Fiction, are you not haunted?'

He started uneasily, then drank more coffee. I waited. He came up to me.

'Yes, I'm haunted; not by a shape—I could dispose of that by a nerve tonic—but by a *smell*—do you hear that, man?—*a smell of hot joints!*'

'Simply grand!' I said. 'So splendidly novel — such an improvement on the old-fashioned ghost.'

He seized my arm.

'Hush! What's that? Here, climb up on the table; something's going to happen!'

A cat paddled along the floor; she mewed, sniffed uneasily, then gnawed sideways as if at a bone. I strained my eyes; the cat was gnawing *nothing*. We sprang off the table.

'You saw that?' he cried. 'The cat sees this horrid thing. Oh, Jupiter! the smell of joints grows worse each moment. You smell nothing?'

I shook my head. 'Only coffee,' I said.

'How will it end?' he cried wildly. 'This torture will kill me.'

I nodded encouragingly.

'Don't die till you get a really good climax; but perhaps then it might be more effective.'

Then I rushed off to a publisher.

A JOURNALISTIC ROULADE

(*a*) NOT THE ONLY 'W. A.'

I MUST admit to a feeling of surprise that more notice should not have been taken of a most remarkable character-study now being presented at the Pavoli Theatre of Varieties by a certain Mr. Dan Leno. I am not certain as to the nationality of this gentleman, except that he is far too clever to be purely British, though I fancy, from his name, he must be an Italian, with possibly a strain of Jewish blood in his veins. However that may be, his performance is of quite remarkable merit. I went to the Pavoli, as is my wont, not to seek mere amusement, or to experience that gross pleasure that so many dearly love—of seeking some external aid to the process of digestion. I went for intellectual analysis; to dissect the sophistries of theatrical

art; to be stimulated by the oxygenizing effect of some subtle conception or daring phase of complex psychology.

Mr. Dan Leno satisfied my requirements. I will not say fully; no one ever trod the boards who completely satisfied my artistic sense of fitness, but he was notably excellent. He appeared as an eccentric Professor of Anatomy. He was greeted with foolish laughter by those to whom any departure from the normal, any subtle study of character, is a cause of senseless merriment. Mr. Leno properly rewarded the foolish demonstration with a stony stare of contempt.

I was particularly pleased with his appearance: the tangled mass of hair, the hectic colouring on the face, the restless movements, betokening, within a frame of slight physique, an exuberant mental vitality. The touch of grotesque abruptness with which he drew his diagrams was (so I thought) a subtle and admirable way of suggesting his agreement with Lombroso's theory respecting the propinquity between insanity and genius. Even in his diagram of the human skeleton there was a want of pedantic accuracy, particularly in dealing with the ribs and lower limbs, which showed

how he meant the Professor, with all his learning, to be an idealist, a kind of visionary (such as Ibsen would have delighted in), one feverishly anxious to suggest improvements.

The tone of enthusiastic self-confidence with which Mr. Leno, as the Professor, advanced his fanciful theory about the advantages which would accrue had the calf of the leg been on the front and not the back of the leg was almost sublime. The tragic earnestness of his demeanour when arguing for the desirability of having eyes on the top of the head (so convenient, as he said, when passing under ladders) was a rare objective presentment of egoistic emotion. Finally, his wild snatch of song about the varieties of bone was an Ophelia-like touch I most warmly commend. Truly a most convincing performance.

(*b*) POLITICS IN NURSERYLAND.

(*From our Special Baby Correspondent.*)

Latest Nursery Intelligence.—It has transpired that three blind mice, who recently pursued the wife of a farmer, have had their tails cut off. The lady in question executed the deed with

the assistance of a carving-knife. The future treatment of the mice now demands attention.

EXTRACTS FROM COMMENTS OF THE NURSERY PRESS.

The Infant Prodigy Mail.—Without claiming omnipotence and superhuman penetration, we would like to point out that the action of the mice was long ago foreseen by us, and that every detail of the incident was transparent to our most cherubic printer's boy. We feel, however, that the inadequacy of the punishment shows clearly that the farmer's wife is too old to pursue a thoroughly drastic policy, and we would suggest that the farmer's daughter in the future should take her place. In this way younger blood will be brought in. There is nothing like young blood.

The Morning Feeder.—The brutal militarism of the farmer's wife is to be greatly deplored. Her action with the carving-knife shows that the great forces of steel-trade capitalism are rampant. We do not understand how anyone can object to be pursued by mice. The entire episode is a melancholy illustration of sharp dealing.

The Baby Times.—It is with feelings of no

ordinary satisfaction that we gather from this morning's intelligence that the rodents who recently pursued the agricolæan spouse should have been punished for their impertinence. To those who appear to favour a pro-Mouse policy, we would point out that for long mice have been closely associated with villainy, as witness the historical intimacy existing between the white mice of the notorious Count Fosco and their master, as related in Collins' Reports. Our only regret is that the punishment was limited to the removal of the caudal appendage. This ill-timed leniency, this policy of 'cut and run,' will, if we mistake not, be subsequently regretted.

The Dollminster Gazette.—We are glad to find ourselves in agreement both with the action of the farmer's wife and with the action of the mice. In following the farmer's wife they surely followed a natural instinct, whilst, on the other hand, some kind of reprisal was quite legitimate. Whether a dessert-knife instead of a carving-knife would have been more in accordance with humane treatment is arguable. We cannot quite agree with the *Lex talionis* policy, and at the same time we are unable to endorse the forward policy of the mice.

(*c*) IN THE DAYS OF MY YOUTH.—THE VILLAIN.

(*A Page from the 'M.A.P. of Life.'*)

I was born in the ber-rave, ber-rave days of yore. Ah! those were times indeed. I was a babe of Gargantuan size, as befitted the offspring of a genie. My father was then failing in health, but as he had ramped, raged, and performed unnecessary wonders for so many years—was he not nephew to the one who performed the bottle-trick in the Arabian story?—he was pensioned off at the Annual Meeting of Genii and Wizards. My father devoted his remaining centuries to my education, and if he saw the least sign of a virtuous inclination, he would instantly suppress it. Owing to this admirable training I soon became a superlative scoundrel, and my early years were passed in studying for an ogreship. The profession of ogre was then coming in; genii were beginning to be considered old-fashioned. As I grew older, times changed. Villains diminished in size, and I began to fear that my terrorizing propensities would lose their pristine power. However, we had fine old castles and gloomy

dungeons with which to console ourselves. I cultivated a stern and forbidding countenance, and, at the kind advice of a certain Mr. Ainsworth, a hollow, sepulchral voice, which made my throat rather sore. Still, I *was* hated and feared. Ha, ha! those shrieking maidens, those infuriated heroes. What a lively time I gave them for nine hundred and ninety-nine pages out of the thousand!

* * * * *

The editor does not wish me to dwell on my later life. He is quite right; it would spoil the title. But I must utter a protest against the miserable make-believe villains of the present day. A wretched, anæmic, frock-coated, cigar-smoking crew. I don't believe there's a beetling brow, or a bloodshot eye, or a thunder-and-lightning expression amongst the whole lot of 'em. As for myrmidons! they haven't one to bless themselves with. Zounds and fury! it isn't respectable. Then, again, castles—why, the novelists occupy the castles now, and the villain has to rent a flat! No wonder our influence is waning. What would have been thought of my father if he had dabbled in chemistry, and kept a laboratory and made messy experiments? Faugh! he

slaughtered like a true black-hearted, uncompromising villain. Not one or two quiet, paltry murders, but wholesale massacres with picturesque accompaniments. But I am digressing. Let me direct the reader's attention once more to the glories of my past scoundrelish youth. Villains *were* villains then. No matter, perhaps, even now—a time will come——!

RHYMES

RHYMES

SPRING AND THE POET

(*A Seasonable Reflection.*)

'HAIL, gentle Spring, fair comer, hail!
Crown the bare trees with misty green,
And smother every hill and dale
In flow'ry sheen!'

Thus sang the poet, lyric-mad,
When April's reign had scarce begun;
Nor recked he that the damsel had
A sense of fun.

In truth, she is a roguish maid,
And hearing what the poet bid,
She, when he murmured 'Hail,' obeyed,
And hail she did.

'Tis only April's 'little way,'
And though few crocuses, we find
Some cusses of, I grieve to say,
Another kind.

So change thy sentimental tone,
O bard, for April's wit is keen ;
And poets, mockingly, alone
Are crowned with green.

TO AUTUMN

(*By a Believer in 'Old October.'*)

I CANNOT tolerate the spring,
I do not like the summertime,
The autumn only meriting
To have its praises sung in rhyme.
The winter with its Christmas cheer
Proves too exacting for my purse ;
It whispers 'gout,' and therefore here
To autumn I inscribe my verse.

I cannot tolerate the spring
('Twas said before, but pardon this,
For as it's not a usual thing.
The sentiment needs emphasis).
The poets prate of birds and buds—
For me the springtide bears its tale
Of British workmen's cheerful thuds,
Of blossoms from the whitewash-pail.

I do not like the summer-time,
With fiery sunshine beating down
(Suggesting some remoter clime),
For often am I then 'done brown';
My wife craves country change, where she
'Views "Nature like an open book"';
A 'Luxe' edition it must be,
Her bills have such a costly look!

For me, the bracing autumn days,
With recently re-kindled fires,
The annual, recurring phase
Of 'rubbers' (knowing naught of tires);
No 'change,' no 'holiday appeal,'
No 'cleaning out' disturbs the air,
When to the blazing hearth I wheel
My easy, after-dinner chair.

A LAMENT

(*By Smith Minor.*)

AFTER THE SUMMER HOLIDAYS.

FINISHED are the holidays,
Vanished is the time of frolic,
On a printed slip I gaze,
Which has made me melancholic;

And though tanned by summer sun,
  Comes the thought—a cheerless comer—
Masters hold (it is their fun !)
  Tanning doesn't end with summer ;
Just the thing to freeze the blood is
That grim phrase, ' Resume their studies !'

Comes at last the Monday black,
  Father puts a smile that's firm on,
Pats me kindly on the back,
  Tends a sovereign and sermon ;
Tears and tuck my mother grants,
  Love—and hints for underclothing.
Technicalities on pants
  Always fill my mind with loathing.
Coddling—I call it fooling—
Indicates approach of schooling.

Centuries of Gallic strife
  Do not please me—as expected ;
Centuries that cheer my life
  Are with cricketing connected ;
Euclid and his ' riders ' tire,
  Though I really am no laggard,
For one Rider I admire,
  Usually known as Haggard :
Work compulsory I'd vary—
Schools should all be *voluntary*.

A LONDON ANNUAL

Sing a song of London fog,
Sulphurous and gritty;
Stealthily it comes to clog
Traffic in the City:
Do you live down Brixton way,
Or at Fulham, haply,
Travelling to town each day?
Shade of famous *Tapley!*
Even *Mark* might fume and fuss
At a 'cruel, crawling' bus.

Sing a song of murky gloom,
Odorous and clinging
(If the influenza doom
Has not stopped your singing).
For this 'Yellow Peril' will,
Wheresoe'er you're dwelling,
Constitute a saffron ill
(Kindly note the spelling);
And the papers, I confess,
Nearly all seem 'Yellow Press.'

Sing a song of sunless days,
When mine eyes alight on
Weather notes that speak the praise
Of belovèd Brighton.

To my doctor I repair,
  Visit voluntary;
Hope he'll think a change of air
  Highly necessary,
And will then prescribe for me
Dose of—London-by-the-Sea.

ATMOSPHERICAL PSYCHOLOGY

(A learned doctor of philosophy, in America, has compiled a book proving, conclusively, that the reason why man is froward in all his ways may be found in the state of the weather.)

As a common or garden excuse,
  Heredity's fully played out;
Ibsen's *motif* has gone to the deuce
  Without any manner of doubt.
Now, the notion is certainly rum
  Just aired by this clever Yankee,
For all morals have by it become
  A matter of weather, you see.

Lo! 'tis patent to me and to all,
  This opens a vista sublime
Of excuses on which one may call
  When reaching one's home—after time.

'Dearest love' (storm-cone hoisted for gales),
'I beseech you not coldly to frown,
But my bump of locality fails
When the glass at all quickly goes down.'

Should you happen to borrow a loan
(Such a thing has, I fancy, been done;
Its return is less frequently known,
Which provides needy jesters with fun),
Wind and weather permitting, you trust—
On the chart is your character pinned—
To repay what you owe; yet it must
Be a question of 'raising the wind.'

As a would-be smooth writer of lines,
I ought to apologize here
For the constant recurrence of nines,
Which renders my metre so queer;
Since my stanzas they *should* run *nine-eight*,
Yet the fog on my 'gas' makes demand,
Thus my metre increases in rate;
'Tis the weather, you quite understand.

IN A SPIRIT OF INQUIRY

A LADY writing to the *Academy* anent a list of books suitable for children *up to the age of twelve* mentions Shakespeare's poems as one of her favourite books at that youthful period. Should this phenomenal choice prove contagious, one will have to address a lady acquaintance thus:

Tell me, lady—break it gently—
When but five, were you intently
  Letting Ibsen brain bewilder?
In one *Doll's House* finding pleasures,
Snubbing *Jack's* constructive measures
  For an abler *Master Builder?*

Were you, as an infant, yielding
To the full-blown charms of Fielding?
  And when you were carried bedward
(Bernard Shaw's views notwithstanding),
Did you spout upon the landing
  From a certain *Lear*—not Edward?

Did you—please excuse suggestion—
Write upon the sonnet question?
  Nay, I ask it not in malice;
I, alas! could only glory
In some foolish Eastern story,
  Or the Wonderland of *Alice.*

'VOX ET PRAETEREA NIHIL'

(In a recent divorce suit, one of the reasons given by the lady for leaving her husband was that she could not stand his Welsh accent.)

I QUITTED home when I was young—
  Ill-usage you perchance suspect;
But no; 'twas through my father's tongue:
  He spoke in Scottish dialect.

His kindliness had only served
  Affairs more hopelessly to botch;
His softness made me grow reserved—
  I never cared for butter-scotch.

My mother, much attached to me,
  Was Yankee-born, I must confess;
How could she prove a *certainty*
  Whose teaching was so full of 'guess'?

Love's messenger, in course of years,
  Seemed sent to grant my soul's desire;
Then Saxon instinct roused my fears,
  And made me shun his Celtic fire.

For love should be without alloy,
  If one may trust to Mudie's tales,
And could one ever view with joy
  A man whose accent echoed Wales?

Some foolish folk consult the stars;
But I foretell from lips and throats
The vanity of rolling 'r's,'
The levity a lisp denotes.

Let superficial people prize
Cheap virtue as their shallow choice;
For me the test of friendship lies
In mere inflection of the voice.

LITERARY THERAPEUTICS

'Verses fulfil a highly important function in the prevention of nervous strain. The use of pen, ink, and paper blows off the mental strain.'

Dr. Andrew Wilson, 'Mind and Body.'

Once in the happy days gone by
I thought the Muse inspired my song;
But now 'tis very clear that I
Was wrong.

Those sonnets eulogizing 'her,'
My Amaryllis sweet (or Jane),
Were simply vents to ease some ner-
Vous strain.

And when, to martial mood inclined,
I sang about our foe's fell rout,
My eloquence was but a kind
Of gout.

Ah! now I understand the care
With which those friends who deem me 'mug'
Said in the market verses were
A 'drug.'

For now a doctor's keen insight
Has gauged their therapeutic skill;
He recommends them as he might
A pill.

So, Mr. Editor, you see,
There lies, if this idea be true,
A great responsibility
On you.

Unless you have a heart of flint,
You will not let my nerves grow worse;
For *health's sake*, therefore, kindly print
My verse.

The editor heeds not my val-
Ediction, and he growls at me,
'No hope for copyist of Cal-
Verley.'

WON BY TRICKS

O Sylvia is a winsome maid
(Alack ! her cheeks are pale).
She came for his advice, she said
(Ah ! wherefore does she ail ?).
No ill could he discover—strange !
So recommended her a 'change.'

O Sylvia has a wicked eye
(She is not always pale).
He grieved to hear her plaintive sigh
(Ah ! wherefore does she ail ?).
'A change ?' quoth she; 'but whither range ?
I prithee, doctor, name your change.'

He stayed a minute, sore perplexed
(Alack, the love-sick male !),
For exegesis of his text
(Alas ! the time-worn tale).
And then she won her pretty game ;
He cried : 'Oh, sweetheart, change your name !'

THE FORECAST

Cloud or sunshine, stormy—fair ?
  Anxiously I ask the question,
Puckered is the brow with care
  At a dubious suggestion ;
Dismal presage fills the mind,
Lest the Fates should prove unkind.

Fugitive from city's roar
  To a gentle sylvan glade,
Never longed for sunshine more,
  Or of cloud felt so afraid,
As the questioner whose quest
Dreads the parenthetic 'lest.'

Standing by my Stella's side,
  Loud and fast the heart is beating,
Will she deign to be my bride ?
  Cloud or sunshine ? I'm repeating.
When I turned to her I knew,
For I saw the cloudless blue.

TO LUCY

May I ask you, Lucy dear,
Why your glance is so severe,
Why those eyes of pearly gray
Mutely bid me go away,
And the dimples will not stay
On your velvet cheeks to-day,
Why this pout, this peevish tear?
Tell, oh, tell me, Lucy dear!

True it is, my Lucy sweet,
That my vision loves to greet
Other eyes of dovelike hue—
Something like yours, Lucy, too—
But I met my Ethel, Loo,
Long before I first saw you;
Do not deem me, then, a cheat,
Be not jealous, Lucy sweet.

Think you, love, caresses more
Have late gone to Ethel's store?
Take these kisses, one, two, three,
And the debt is paid, you see.

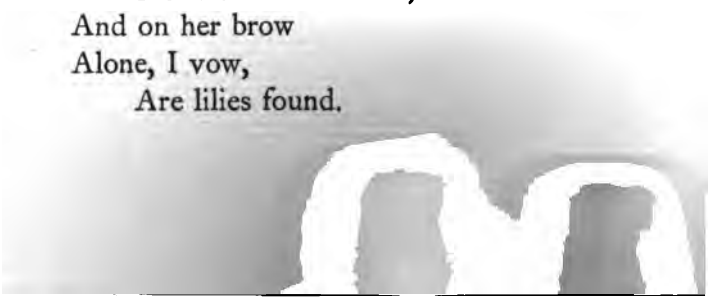
Ethel smiles across at me,
Lucy scrambles on my knee ;
Ethel, wife whom I adore,
Lucy, jealous babe of four.

TO NANCY

Ah ! do you know
The sunrise glow
Within her eyes ?
And have you seen
The golden sheen
Of love arise ?

No stars that grace
Night's dusky face
With silvern flash
Can shine supreme
When steals the gleam
From velvet lash.

No roses seek
Save on her cheek,
None else renowned ;
And on her brow
Alone, I vow,
Are lilies found.



The sunshine breaks,
The flower awakes,
Does Nancy sing ;
And ever flows,
Where'er she goes,
Eternal spring.

TO A YOUNG GIRL

Pretty child whose dreaming gaze
Ponders over fairy lays,
And to whom life's problems be
Touched by rainbow fantasy,
With the azure of the skies
Glistening in wistful eyes ;
Dweller in sweet Fancy's glade,
Where the roses never fade.

Pretty maid with tangled hair,
Heedless of a world of care,
Dream !—such dreams as mortals hold
Turn the dross of life to gold ;
Dream ! O sleeping Princess sweet,
Till some fairy Prince you meet,
And your eyelids ope in bliss,
Wakened by love's magic kiss.

SERENADE

THE sky is flushed with fading rose
And dying gold;
The summer day has reached its close,
Its story told.
To me the twining jasmine tells
Of fragrant hair;
And see, O see, my lady dwells
Divinely there!

The western sky is growing gray,
And through the mist—
Sweet incense to departing day—
The moon upris't;
A gentle music thrilling falls
From up above,
And list, O list! my lady calls
A word of love!

The casement closes; to mine eyes
The stars go out.
Her voice is dumb; Earth's music dies.
Ah, do not doubt!

Now Evening's velvet darkness creeps
Across the light,
And hush! O hush! my lady sleeps.
Sweetheart, good-night.

IDEALA

When noiseless Night, with starry eyes
And cool, clear glance, has put to rout
The restless spectres that arise
While busy Day is yet about,
Then through my waking fancy gleams
A vision I will ne'er resign—
The magic maiden of my dreams,
The girl who never will be mine.

You smile at me and shake your head,
You deem me 'sentimental boy,'
And hint when future years have fled
Such fantasies will lose their joy.
Nigh twenty years have come and gone
Since manhood thrilled me with its sign,
Yet constantly she becks me on—
The girl who never will be mine.

Nay, think her not another's bride,
  This peerless princess of the night,
And, moralizing, start to chide,
  Or glibly talk of wrong and right.
I tell you nay; mine eyes alone
  In hers have seen the love-light shine—
There, on Imagination's throne,
  The girl who never will be mine.

All day I watch with wistful gaze
  The surging throngs that crowd the street,
As if expecting in the maze
  At last my dear dream-friend to meet.
But though grim failure flout my zeal,
  No one shall desecrate the shrine,
Or drive from me my heart's ideal—
  The girl who never will be mine.

THE INWARD EYE

See the world is growing old,
  Gnawing grief and carking care,
And the lust of war and gold
  Meet us, greet us, everywhere.

Faded is the flush of dawn ;
  All our sunrise hopes are fled ;
Can it be the smiling morn?
  Was a mirage overhead?

Yet beneath the wintry sod
  Beats the eager pulse of spring,
And the fiercely-scourging rod
  Breaks forth into blossoming.
Lo! the arch of promise hung
  In yon black and stormy sky ;
For the world is ever young
  To the poet's inward eye.

THE END

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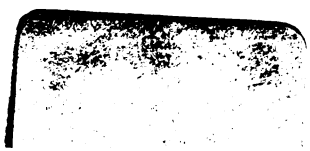

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